WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2) CONTRACT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

101 E. Wilson Street
DOA Building, St. Croix Room 136
Madison, WI 53707

Friday, August 20, 1999

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

MINUTES

The W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee is the single point of contact for feedback to the Department of Workforce Development on policy implementation related to W-2 agencies, and includes representation from the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA), Urban Caucus counties, W-2 private agencies in Milwaukee County and the balance of state, and Tribal W-2 agencies.

Committee Attendees: Jean Rogers, Chair; Mary Ann Cook, Dane Co. Dept. of Human Services; Rosa Dominguez (alternate), Opportunities Industrialization Center of Greater Milwaukee (OIC-GM); Mona Garland (alternate), MAXIMUS; Deb Hughes (alternate), Southwest Consortium; Rita Renner (alternate), YW-Works; Tina Koehn, United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS); Jim Krivsky (alternate), Racine Co. Human Services Dept.; Barbara Metoxen, Oneida Tribe; Jeff McCabe (alternate), Employment Solutions; Kim Mooney (for Diane Hausinger), Fond du Lac Co. Dept. of Social Services; Jim Nitz (alternate), Kaiser Group; Shirley Ross, La Crosse Dept. of Human Services; Michael Van Dyke, Door Co. Dept. of Social Services; Judy Weseman, Kenosha Co. Division of Workforce Development

State Staff Attendees: Ann Agnew, AO; Nancy Buckwalter, DES; Ginevra Ewers, BMO; Randy Hayward, BEPO; Todd Hunter, BMO; Jane Jilk, BWI; Roger Kautz, BEPO; Joan Lockyear, BWI; Margaret McMahon, BWI; Amy Mendel, BEPO; Jude Morse, BMO; Greg Smith, ASD; Shawn Smith, BWI; Jan Van Vleck, Special Assistant; Chris Williams, BWI

Absent: Phyllis Bermingham, Marathon Co. Employment and Training

Guests: Jane Bartha, Kaiser Group; Marcia Christianson, Forward Service Corporation; Tony Dziedzic, YW-Works; Kelly Grant, Central Wisconsin Community Action Council; Liz Green, Rock Co. HSD; Sharon McCormick, Sheboygan Co. Dept. of Health and Human Services; Teresa Pierce, Western Wisconsin Private Industry Council (PIC); Marilyn Putz, Walworth County, Kaiser Group; Kathryn Ryan, Dodge Co. HS & HD; Gary Rudzianis, Curtis & Associates; John Schere, Opportunities Industrialization Center of Greater Milwaukee (OIC-GM); Kim Walia, Clark Co. Dept. of Social Services

Recorder: Shari Busse, W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee Coordinator

Welcome

Jean Rogers opened the meeting by welcoming the committee and asking for comments on the July minutes.

July 1999 Minute Approval

A motion was made by Michael Van Dyke to approve the July 16, 1999 minutes and seconded by Deb Hughes. Motion carried.

Issue/Discussion: Customer Satisfaction Survey, Kevin Huggins, DES Regional Office

Kevin Huggins briefly explained that current RFP language states a customer satisfaction measure must be completed every six months. He presented the survey instrument drafted by the workgroup formed by recommendation of the committee. The first page is a brief introduction to the survey addressed to the W-2 customer. The survey itself consists of fourteen questions ranging from what services the customer received to how they think services could be improved. An option for distribution discussed by the workgroup included a CARES run to identify those to be surveyed which would be mailed to the customer to return. The question regarding response rate to mailings was raised. Agencies agreed they would want more control over ensuring responses. The group agreed that the survey instrument could be a core document that could be added to by individual agencies to meet their needs.

Discussion of using the survey as a quality improvement tool followed. It was suggested that a space be provided for the person completing the survey to include their name if they wanted additional services. Shirley Ross indicated LaCrosse Co. has an optional signature space on their customer service form, along with a space to indicate if they customer wanted someone to contact them for additional follow-up. Jean Rogers suggested that rather than including this on the core document; this was one of the items agencies could add since they would have to ensure someone would follow up on these surveys if the person wanted to be contacted. Examples of additional information could be shared with agencies in the transmittal document that accompanies the final survey.

Jim Krivsky asked about non-English speaking and reading individuals. Tina Koehn offered UMOS services to provide translation of the survey in Spanish and Hmong to the other agencies. Judy Weseman indicated other programs should be included in question 1. The question focuses on services received, not programs. The workgroup had concerns about different agencies administering different programs. The survey was designed to focus on W-2 services in a simple format. Jan Van Vleck indicated that surveys typically rotate between things that are positive and things that are negative. Jean Rogers stated it was particularly good that this survey focuses on the positive.

Judy Weseman asked if the survey could focus on different groups every six months – all cash payment cases, all food stamp cases, etc. This could affect the data for reporting purposes. The expectation would be that agencies would report who was surveyed and what the rationale for this was. Agencies can use this tool as a self correcting, practical management tool. Reports will be due every January 30 and July 30. Therefore, the first report will be due six months after the new contract begins – June 30, 2000. Agencies can determine when to conduct the survey within each six-month timeframe.

Suggestions were made to include questions about food stamps and medical assistance. Jean Roger suggested question 9 be modified to read "The W-2 agency gave me information about services such as health care and food stamps". Rita Renner questioned the number needed to be completed for a valid survey. Local agencies have flexibility to determine this. Teresa Pierce asked if the surveys would affect Right of First Selection (RFS). Jean Rogers indicated that the survey is not a specific measure for RFS. Rather, the purpose of regular surveying is to apprise both the agency and the state of the perceived quality of customer service. The intent is that it be used by agencies as a tool for continuous improvement; and by the state as a resource for training.

Jim Nitz asked if agencies would be submitting their plan for completing the survey for approval or for information. Plans should be submitted to the Area Administrator primarily for informational purposes. In summary, the committee agreed to approve the survey with the modification of question 9 and bolding the word "find" in questions 10 and 11.

<u>Issue/Discussion: Monthly W-2 Time Limits Update & Review of Extension Process, Jane Jilk, DES/BWI and Margaret McMahon, DES Regional Office</u>

Margaret McMahon shared information about the case numbers approaching their 24th month as of July 1999. There has been a continued decline in the number of cases. For example, in March 1999 there were 507 cases that could potentially reach their 24th month in October 1999. As of July, there were only 219 cases. Margaret underscored the importance of continued intensive case management to ensure participants are moving to a higher or more appropriate rung of the ladder.

Margaret also explained the number of potential vs. actual extension requests. For example, as of July 31st, for September 1999, there were 32 potential extension request cases. Of these, 13 extension requests were received, 9 were approved, 2 were withdrawn and 2 were pending. The numbers are based on requests received by the July 1st due date for September 1999 extension requests. Additional requests were received after the due date. The Department is aware that extenuating circumstances could cause an extension request to be delayed.

Judy Weseman questioned what the lack of denial says about the appropriateness of the services being provided to the participant. Further, she asked if this would indicate that all appropriate services had been rendered. Jean Rogers stated that the lack of denial shows that the agency has met the statutory requirement for the request of an extension. Separate from that is the issue of whether or not the client was receiving all appropriate services. If the agency meets the statutory requirement, the extension will be granted at some level. The Department is continuing to work through the process of how to communicate information in these cases to the agencies. It is necessary to address both if the agency met the statutory requirement in how they requested the extension and if all actions were done appropriately in the case simultaneously but not necessarily in the same document. If the format for notifying agencies of the Department's decision changes, previous notifications will be rescinded and reissued.

Michael Van Dyke stated as the recipient of one of these early letters, he found the tone and the content of the letter disturbing. He hoped the suggestions made in the letter would have come earlier from the regional office. He questioned the failure to serve implications. He challenged any other agency to see the level of services working with the family in question. Some of the services identified in the letter were new to them and good to know but not appropriate after the fact. He agreed that separating the extension request decision from other possible resources would be a step in the right direction.

Jean Rogers agreed that these are issues the Department needs to address. She recognized that no one agency could think of everything possible to do with a client. Many good ideas are coming from brainstorming these cases. FEPs are not expected to be doctors, lawyers and social workers but are expected to identify issues. Agencies are expected to be creative and innovative in identifying service ideas. In her review of cases applying for extension requests, she has seen a lack of medical management for clients. There is a tendency in the medical community to focus on what the client can't do – agencies must work with the medical community to find out what they "can do".

Mary Ann Cook stated they all agree with creativity but questioned the language regarding failure to serve. She indicated that as an employment and training program, the FEP could not be expected to challenge medical providers. DVR is part of the Department and a logical place to look for expertise in many of these cases but DVR counselors are denying cases because of poor prospects. Jean stated this is inappropriate and the Department needs to be made aware of these cases.

Agencies are not expected to provide the same services for everyone. They are expected to identify those who need different services and provide customized case management. Michael Van Dyke reported that all seven of their W-2 payment cases have social workers assigned to them. Jean indicated that the FEP and social worker must be communicating. There may be a tendency in larger agencies for the FEP to communicate less with others involved in the case. The teaming concept is essential and all actions taken in a case should be documented to demonstrate what is trying to be accomplished. FEPs must understand they are mandatory reporters. Some CARES case notes indicate FEPs did not see it as their role.

Michael Van Dyke requested the Department provide communication to the agencies regarding what is being looked for in an extension request and how expansive the packet of submitted information should be. Margaret McMahon indicated more information can be shared regarding W-2 T cases. She requested patience with CSJs because there have been few CSJ extension requests at this point.

Shirley Ross suggested agencies consider contracting with another provider for assessments. LaCrosse Co. has found another provider who is able to provide assessments quicker than DVR. Shirley also questioned whether getting SSI could be a goal when realistically it is the only option and doctors support it. Margaret stated "obtain SSI" cannot be the primary goal, but it can be a goal. Agencies should develop a parallel plan of other constructive services and activities that will benefit the individual and the family.

Margaret reiterated that participants have the right to know about what an extension is and the process for getting one however, they are not guaranteed the right to apply for an extension. The agency must decide if applying for an extension is appropriate and if the person qualifies. If the agency finds the client does not qualify for an extension request and the client disagrees, they could follow the fact-finding process.

Mona Garland asked if there is a special review process for those who appear in the potential request category but not in actual. A report is being developed to extract that information. It is expected that agencies know about these cases so the Department will be looking to them for this information to validate successes.

Issue/Discussion: Contingency Fund Access, Secretary Linda Stewart

Secretary Stewart indicated that the Department is well aware of concerns over the upcoming contract levels. Throughout the budget process, maintaining the levels requested for the contract amounts and the contingency fund was a priority. Maintaining contract amounts was not successful however. The Joint Committee on Finance's perception is there is more than enough money to serve the caseload.

Secretary Stewart then shared the draft for criteria for accessing the fund. The contingency fund will be under the jurisdiction of Joint Finance and they will be critical of any request for access to the fund. Language in the draft indicates that extraordinary and unmanageable increase in W-2 cash assistance caseloads due to economic downturn or a crisis beyond the control of the W-2 agency may be addressed by the W-2 Contingency Fund. To be eligible for a Contingency Fund request prior to the end of the contract, without Contingency Funds, agencies will exhaust 100% of contract dollars for benefits. Nothing in the document addresses the exhaustion of Community Reinvestment funds, which potentially will be questioned by Joint Finance. The Department wants to be able to explain what the Community Reinvestment funds will be used for. The Secretary asked committee members to share their feedback and concerns. Should committee members wish to give examples, they should send them to Mary Ann Cook who will aggregate and forward them to Shari Busse. Shari will forward this information to Jean Rogers and Secretary Stewart.

Michael Van Dyke asked for clarification of 1B, which states "Agency cash assistance caseload has increased due to crisis beyond the control of the agency". Last month Door Co. had ten cases and the next contract budgets for seven. Even a small increase could be a crisis for some agencies. The Secretary clarified that it will be tied to the situation, the time and the location. Tina Koehn indicated that the Milwaukee Co. caseload increased in June. This is a concern for all agencies.

Joint Finance expects agencies will tap into any unobligated TANF funds including unobligated Community Reinvestment dollars. They may ask why an agency did not obligate a rainy day fund. Secretary Stewart encouraged agencies to be proactive and consider saving a percentage of Community Reinvestment funds for such instances. Mary Ann Cook stated that county boards might exercise the option to close down the program if they think they may not get the funds. Larger counties can wait for reconciliation but smaller counties may not be able to. Jean Rogers reminded the committee that the contract is not expenditure driven and some risk is assumed.

Michael Van Dyke questioned whether the Contingency Fund will be available when the benefit allocation is gone and administration dollars are obligated. This meets the criteria for accessing the fund as described in the draft. Secretary Stewart explained that it is the Department's position to make sure that agencies are able to serve clients. The Department will work with Joint Finance and the Department of Administration (DOA) to educate them regarding Contingency Fund issues.

Issue/Discussion: Wisconsin Employment Transportation Program, Brian Solomon, DWE
Brian Solomon of the Division of Workforce Excellence indicated that DWD and the Department of Transportation (DOT) are jointly sponsoring Wisconsin's Employment Transportation Program. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) has a special section on employment transportation known as the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program. This program has authorized $750 million over 6 years for states and localities to develop transportation solutions that help their low-income residents better access jobs and employment related activities. JARC dollars are competitive and require a 50% match though other federal funds (such as TANF) are eligible to serve as that match. DOT (TDM dollars) and DWD (TANF dollars) are combining resources in order to maximize Wisconsin's application for JARC funds.

The application process will occur this fall, 1999 in order to forward applications on to the FTA for JARC matching. The application will be sent to a variety of stakeholders statewide and will require local collaboration among transportation professionals and employment and training staff (and review and signoff by officials within those same categories). Local agencies and authorities, tribal organizations and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. Applicants will be required to describe the local coordination/partnerships they have formed, conduct an assessment of the regions overall transportation needs, detail all existing transportation resources, identify the gaps, and develop a local plan for closing that gap. These will be separate from W-2 contracts and there is no need to track individuals benefiting from this service, as their 60-month eligibility clocks will not tick (except for via quarterly survey).

Agencies should start now trying to coordinate locally. County wide or larger programs are strongly recommended. A Wisconsin program **can** carry people into another state. Areas that received grants in that last period but were not able to implement their program immediately will not be penalized in any way from receiving new funding. Carry over from previous transportation contract dollars is not allowed however because these contracts were tied to the W-2 contract. Planning information will be issued soon. For more information, please contact Brian Solomon at (608) 267-7514 or solombr@dwd.state.wi.us.

Issue/Discussion: Monthly Training Update, Tony Veeder, DES Training Section
Tony Veeder presented the training update. BadgerCare training for eligibility workers was completed the middle of July. Comments received regarding the course have been very positive. BadgerCare training courses for workers who do not run eligibility and those for customer service staff are currently underway statewide.

Referring to the committee's earlier discussion of customer service and case management, Tony shared some information about training opportunities. The Enhanced Case Management offering "Case Management Strategies" is being refined and updated to include the "priorities" of this year and next including time limits and extensions. The nature of this course is highly interactive and focuses on building skills and strategies, not on the detail of individual policies. This has been a very successful course with 154 individuals completing it to date. Tony also suggested the supervisory course "Agency Discretion and W-2 Policy" which discusses the different aspects of the W-2 program. Jean Rogers suggested that agencies send key supervisors to advanced case management training so they are aware of what their workers are learning.

Issue/Discussion: Monthly CARES Report Update, Chris Williams, DES/BWI
See attached report. Chris Williams reviewed the CARES report. Logic was added for job clock extensions in July. Auto failure of extensions will be added in August. Automatic failures for expired clocks will be implemented in September. Manual failure reasons are available at this time. Tracking of extension requests and automatic notices of requests will also be implemented in September. BadgerCare was implemented in Cares. As of 8/13, there have been 12,091

requests for BadgerCare. Of these 8,425 have been confirmed, 6910 as approvals. Chris emphasized that agencies need to prevent and clean up duplicate pin numbers.

Mary Ann Cook asked a question about EBT roll out and Y2K problems. The Department will check with Dick Mellinger regarding this issue in Dane Co.

Issue/Discussion: Definition of Administration (subcontractors), Ginevra Ewers, DES/BMO
Ginevra Ewers referred to the RFP to clarify the definition of administration as it relates to subcontractors. RFP appendix 9.11 states the term "administrative costs" means costs necessary for the proper administration of the TANF program or separate State programs. (1) It excludes direct costs of providing program services. (i) For example, it excludes costs of providing diversion benefits and services, providing program information to clients, screening and assessments, development of employability plans, work activities, post-employment services, work supports, and case management. It also excludes costs for contracts devoted entirely to such activities.

Therefore, subcontractors providing service functions described above are excluded from the administrative cap.

Issue/Discussion: Obligating TANF Funds, Bob Nikolay, ASD and Jude Morse, DES/BMO
Bob Nikolay explained that the federal TANF Regulations state any funds not obligated by September 30, 1999 must be spent on benefits. Therefore, the State will ensure that appropriate funds are obligated prior to that date. The current 1998-1999 W-2 contract is obligated. Of the $400 million unspent as of September, $320 million will be obligated by then and the rest will be spent on benefits, so the State will not lapse TANF funds at the end of FFY 99. In addition, the 2000-2001 W-2 contracts will be issued prior to that date, signed by Jean Rogers. One signature on the contract is sufficient for obligation. DOA and the Legislative Fiscal Bureau are committed to ensuring funds are obligated prior to September 30, 1999.

The question was raised regarding budget amounts for the 2000-2001 W-2 contracts. It appears at this time that contracts will be issued based on the RFP amounts, subject to amendment for the budget process.

Issue/Discussion: Other Issues
Performance Reports, Jude Morse, DES/BMO
Committee members had previously offered to assist with performance reports for RFP section 3.14. Jude Morse stated that requests to review the performance standards and provide input are appreciated. However, due to the procurement process, the Department must wait until it officially announces the agencies for the next contract period before agencies can be further included in the performance reports process. Per the RFP, the estimated date of notice of intent to award contracts is September 17,1999.

W-2 Procurement Update, Greg Smith and Jude Morse, DES/BMO
Jude Morse began by thanking the committee for bearing with the Department in this procurement process. She referenced an August 6, 1999 e-mail, which caused some concern and assured committee members that it has been addressed. August 6th was the estimated date to announce additional areas open for competition and none were announced. That does not preclude announcements at a later date as the review process for RFS proposals continues. Agencies should anticipate contact from their Regional Office soon regarding proposals. Jude also clarified that the proposals become public record when awards are announced, estimated date September 17, 1999.

Retroactive Food Stamps for Qualified Refugee Aliens, Jean Rogers
Jean Rogers indicated she has made a recommendation to Secretary Stewart that the Department pay retroactive FS benefits for those who fall within the parameters of the court cases. This recommendation is still pending action from the Secretary's office.

Structure of Meeting Agenda, Jean Rogers
It was recommended and agreed that the Training update & CARES update would be combined into a 5-minute time frame for questions regarding the papers received prior to the meeting. In addition, committee members should prioritize the issues given to Mary Ann Cook and provide a time frame for discussion of each. State staff will do the same with agenda items they suggest. Critical items will continue to be first on the agenda

October Meeting, Jean Rogers
Committee members agreed to hold the October meeting of the W-2 Contract & Implementation Committee on October 22, 1999 in Door County. IMAC will be held October 21, 1999 in Door County. Michael Van Dyke agreed to make arrangements for the meeting location, as well as providing hotel information.

Workforce Attachment and Advancement, Jean Rogers
Although JFC reduced the overall funding from $30 to $20 million, the WAA proposal is still included in the budget and the Department is preparing for implementation. WAA funds are to be equally divided between W-2 agencies and PICs to provide job retention and advancement services to the low income working poor. JFC did enact a change in the statutory language requiring DWD develop performance standards. The Department has drafted a policy/program paper that will serve as the basis for the local planning guidelines. Jean asked for volunteers to participate in a focus group with PIC and W-2 agency representation to provide input on the draft policy and procedures outline.

Y2K Update, Nancy Buckwalter, Data Systems
Nancy Buckwalter indicated an Administrator's Memo will be issued the end of September with Y2K information. BITS and contractor staff will be testing State systems on Saturday, January 1, 2000. Agencies will be required to complete facility and IT system checklists on Sunday, January 2, 2000. This information will then be faxed to the Area Administrator and the Central office. If agencies are unable to accomplish this, the Department will assume there is a major power outage or other equipment/facilities failure which prevents an agency from reporting.

NEXT MEETING DATE:
Friday, September 17, 1999
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
30 West Mifflin Street
DVA Building, 8th Fl. Board Room
Madison, WI 53707

RECENT AND UPCOMING CARES CHANGES OVERVIEW

Issued August 19,1999

Major Initiatives: Completed or in Progress	DATE	BACKGROUND
Clocks	7/9 –9/99	Logic was added for job clock extensions in July. Auto failure of extensions will be added in August. Automatic failures for expired clocks will be implemented in September. Manual failure reasons are available at this time. Tracking of extension requests and automatic notices of requests will also be implemented in September.
BadgerCare	7/19/99	BadgerCare was implemented in Cares on this date. As of 8/13, there have been 12,091 requests for BadgerCare. Of these 8,425 have been confirmed, 6910 as approvals. Agencies will be informed by DXBM of any new documentation or any other changes.
MA Forward Cards	7/99	Medicaid and BadgerCare recipients in the pilot counties of Colombia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rock, Sauk, and Walworth have receive their Forward Cards. To date there does not seem to be any problems with card receipt and use. Recipients in the rest of the state will receive their cars approximately three months later. Agencies will be notified prior to the implementation date.
FPL Mass Change	9/10	The annual mass change for Food Stamps is scheduled for this date.
Food Stamp EBT	10/1/99	Testing is ongoing and is on schedule for the Rock County EBT pilot to begin operation in 10/99. The first EBT cards will be produced after August benefit issuance pull-down and client training will begin soon after that. EBT rollout will continue in January 2000.
Pro-Rated/Wage Paying CSJs	10/99	The automation of the pro-rated CSJs will be put into CARES in October 1999.
Major Fatals	Ongoing	Research continues on fatals, which occur when there are a large number of unconfirmed rows on AGEC. A proposal is being developed at this time. Since this is a complicated fix to implement, extensive testing will be required. In the meantime, we can fix some, but not all, of the fatals on a case by case basis. The overall number of fatals and abends which are occurring remains about 50 per week. The average daily transaction count is over a million transactions per day.
Client Registration – Clearance	No date set	We are researching the various causes of duplicate PINs and exploring solutions to reduce their occurrence. We are also testing a method of resolving duplicate PINs when they do occur.
Y2K	Ongoing	Additional Y 2K testing will be conducted from Sept. 10 through October. A walkthrough of the Y2K contingency plans, involving several counties will be conducted Sept 8-10.
Community Reinvestment	On-Hold	A preliminary review of options was conducted by DES. Once federal reporting requirements are determined, Deloitte Consulting will be asked for an estimate to implement in CARES.
Major initiatives: In Planning/Development		
SSA State On-Line Query (SOLQ)	7/99	The necessary query screen and audit trail has been programmed in CARES. The Dane County is piloting SOLQ. A SSA review was held on July 13th and 14th. The query will be limited initially to state and county staff. SSA is not allowing private employee access at this time. Analysis to determine security requirements in CARES to limit access to state and county staff is continuing. Data sharing agreements will need to be signed between the state and each local agency before access will be granted.
Simulation for Benefit Recovery	On Hold	Due to the upcoming implementation of BVCC, this work has been on hold. We will resume this activity after BVCC has been implemented and it is stable.
Quarterly reporting for Food Stamps.	No date set	As a Food Stamp error reduction initiative, we are exploring replacing 3-month reviews with quarterly reporting for Food Stamps. A face to face review would be required every 12 months. Other error reduction strategies are also being considered.
Client Notice Redesign	No date set	A planning meeting for Joint Application Development (JAD) sessions for the Notice Redesign was held on Wednesday. JADs will be beginning in the near future.
Budget Bill Initiatives	No Date Set	The 2000-2001 budget bill presents many possible changes to the CARES system, ranging from minor adjustments to major initiatives. Final details will not be known until the Bill is passed and signed.